

ESIA Media Release

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Victoria's \$797million energy affordability package tackles barriers to energy efficiency upgrades head-on

The Victorian government today announced a \$797 million energy efficiency affordability package including \$447 million earmarked to support energy upgrades for low-income households and rental properties and \$14 million to directly support expansion of the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) program. Minimum energy standards with five stars for rental properties and seven stars for new builds is monumental policy and will drive deeper retrofits and transform infrastructure. Energy bill rebates of \$250 will support those on Job Seeker and with concessions.

"Victoria's jump on energy efficiency COVID-19 recovery policy addresses a myriad of reasons why people don't prioritise energy upgrades, as well as a much-needed cash injection for short-term bill stress in very challenging times," said president of the Energy Savings Industry Association (ESIA), Rod Woolley.

"A VEU 2022-2025 target announcement before Christmas cannot come soon enough for households and tradespeople alike. Victorians are champing at the bit to upgrade air conditioners, hot water and home weather sealing to prevent hot and cold weather extremes and draughts that contribute significantly to home comfort and safety. A bigger target will drive upgrades sooner.

"While we await more details on the commitment, we welcome the \$14 million which will be invested directly into expanding the VEU program. The VEU is the most successful energy efficiency program of any state in Australia and will be a critical vehicle for rolling out significant components of the energy efficiency affordability package and will create thousands of jobs.

The ESIA will engage with the Victorian government to contribute expertise in shaping a robust rollout strategy of today's announcement. This will include delivering energy efficiency upgrades to 250,000 low-income households and support efficiency improvement to 320,000 poor quality rental properties.

The \$250 energy bill rebate will be welcome relief to those on Job Seeker and support programs and we trust that those same people will be encouraged to take up the rebate opportunities that will materialise once the finer details of the package are worked through.

The consideration of energy efficiency alongside the solar and battery components, all making up the \$797 million, is smart policy. We commend the Victorian government on bringing us one step closer to achieving the state's net zero emissions targets for 2050," concluded Mr Woolley.

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